

du Bignon House Remains
Lot #7, South Ward
Town of Frederica
St. Simons Island
Glynn County, Georgia

HABS No. GA-2152

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64-FRED
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design
and Construction
120 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

du Bignon House Remains

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Street Address or Location: Lot #7, South Ward, Town of Frederica,
St. Simons Island, Glynn County, Georgia

Present Owner: Fort Frederica National Monument, Box 367,
St. Simons Island, Georgia

Brief Statement of Significance: This was the largest and most elaborate house
excavated at Fort Frederica and dates from 1797.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Joshua Parker sold to James McGregor and William Sears. Captain Poulain Du Bignon owned it by 1812. He sold to William Dyer, 1822.
2. Date of erection: 1797
3. Architect, builder, suppliers: Unknown
4. Notes on alterations and additions: Since exclusively Colonial artifacts were found in the central part of the house, it is thought to be Colonial. Interview with Dr. Joel L. Shiner and Jackson W. Moore, Archaeologists, USNPS, Fort Frederica National Monument, St. Simons Island, Georgia. The small rooms around this central part are thought to be later additions.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

February 9, 1797: Joshua Parker of Frederica sold to James McGregor and William Sears Lot #7, South Division, containing sixty feet in front and ninety feet back with a tabby wall standing thereon - for £20. Source: GLYNN COUNTY, GEORGIA, DEED BOOK, ABEF.

June 12, 1797: William Sears, merchant, of St. Simons and James McGregor, merchant, of St. Simons etc. etc. own lot # 7 S Ward Frederica.

whereas William Sears is indebted to Carlton Dunkeley and John Smith of Savannah, merchants, \$1390.42.

lot # 7 S Frederica, 60 x 90, with a tabby wall standing thereon....

Sears makes deed to secure debt to Dunkeley and Smith for his half of lot #7 S Frederica... together with all that new erected Messuage or Dwelling House lately erected thereon....

as well as certain Savannah property

Source: GLYNN COUNTY, GEORGIA, DEED BOOK, CD, p. 201.

February 9, 1797, Sears accrued property. Later got rid of it. The next mention of it is:

FOR SALE

A convenient two story DWELLING HOUSE, in the town of Frederica, St. Simons Island, with two lots attached to it, and convenient

out buildings; the whole in tabby work, and full repair, with late improvements. Terms easy, and to be known by applying at Frederica, to Mr. George Abbott; on Jekyll Island, to Capt. DuBignon, the owner, or in Savannah to May 21

THOMAS DECHENEUX

Source: THE REPUBLICAN; and SAVANNAH EVENING LEDGER (Savannah, Georgia) July 23, 1812, p. 1, col. 4.

Poulain DuBignon sells to William Dyer of Glynn County two certain lots in the Town of Frederica known in the plat of the said Town by the numbers 6 and 7 South Division.

Source: GLYNN COUNTY, GEORGIA, DEED BOOK, G, p. 470, May 18, 1822.

All this information is the work of Mrs. Margaret Davis Cate, Sea Island, Georgia.

Prepared by Lionel J. Bienvenu - June 1958

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Nothing is left above grade of this large house with a flattened "H" plan.
2. Condition of fabric: Ruinous; nothing left above grade. Evidence original house burned.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 38'-5" x 60'
2. Foundations: Brick and poured tabby with brick fill.
3. Wall construction: Brick and poured tabby. Outside walls of earlier central block stuccoed with burned shell lime mortar and sand mixture and scored to simulate ashlar.
4. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Wood frame
 - b. Windows and shutters: No evidence other than melted window glass.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plan: Two-story, flattened "H" plan. Central room has two rows of three brick piers running across short dimension at third points. Small square rooms at each corner of short ends of central room. Two rectangular rooms across short ends of central room connecting corner rooms. May have had porches on north and south elevations.
2. Flooring: Tabby
3. Wall and ceiling finish: Smooth plaster on wall of central room.

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4. Doorways and doors: One each in middle of north and south walls.
5. Hardware: Excavation revealed fragment of large box lock, "H" hinges, pintles, large quantity of assorted nails (all of iron).
6. Lighting: No evidence
7. Heating: No evidence
- D. Site: House faces north. Situated in Town of Frederica, old Indian field, flat, 40 acres; Lot #7, South Ward, 60' x 90'. Short north side facing Broad Street, 14' alley to south; bordered on 90' sides by like lots.

There is literary evidence of tabby wall (enclosure) at rear (south) lot line. Excavation revealed wall footing of brick.

Prepared by Philip E. Gardner - June 1958
Architect, National Park Service